

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## ANNUAL REPORT

of

### Commissioner of Veterans' Services

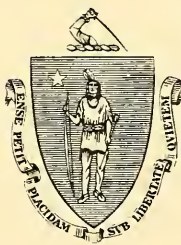
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OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF VETERANS' SERVICES  
15 ASHBURTON PLACE, BOSTON 8

September 15, 1961

*To the Honorable Senate and the House of Representatives:*

In compliance with the requirements of Chapter 115, Section 2, General Laws, as amended, I submit to you the annual report of the Commissioner of Veterans' Services.

The part relating to Veterans' Benefits is for the calendar years 1958 and 1959.

There are sections relating to the work of the Pension-Compensation, Rehabilitation, Hospital Contract and Blood Donor Divisions.

This report also includes a detailed statement of the receipts and expenditures for personnel and incidentals for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1959 and June 30, 1960.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES N. COLLATOS,

*Commissioner*

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED  
JUNE 30, 1959

RECEIPTS

Department Income .....	\$10,881.85
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EXPENDITURES

Salaries of Commissioner and Deputies .....	\$24,892.83
Permanent Employees .....	368,746.92
Temporary Employees .....	10,198.22
Student Interne .....	532.00
Office Expense .....	36,300.28
Reimbursement to Cities and Towns on Account of Veterans' Benefits .....	4,216,968.33
Annuities to Blind and Paraplegic Veterans .....	106,905.80

Financial Statement Verified  
(Under Requirements of C. 7, § 19, GL)  
May 31, 1961

By L. A. BURKE

Approved for Publishing

JOSEPH ALECKS, *Comptroller*

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED  
JUNE 30, 1960

RECEIPTS

Department Income .....	\$7,344.56
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EXPENDITURES

Salaries of Commissioner and Deputies .....	\$22,433.74
Permanent Employees .....	377,472.00
Temporary Employees .....	12,163.65
Student Interne .....	672.00
Office Expense .....	38,096.39
Reimbursement to Cities and Towns on Account of Veterans' Benefits .....	5,486,164.02
Annuities to Blind and Paraplegic Veterans .....	109,911.51

Financial Statement Verified  
(Under Requirements of C. 7, § 19, GL)  
May 31, 1961

L. A. BURKE

Approved for Publishing

JOSEPH ALECKS, *Comptroller*

## VETERANS' BENEFITS

## Chapter 115, General Laws, as amended

Application for Veterans' Benefits is filed in the city or town of legal settlement and referred by the local Agent to the Office of the Commissioner of Veterans' Services with recommendation. Payments are made by the local authorities and the Commonwealth reimburses cities and towns to the amount of one-half authorized and actually paid in settled cases.

In State settled cases, application is filed in the city or town of residence, and cities and towns are reimbursed in full by the Commonwealth.

Burial Allowance is provided in the cases of needy veterans and dependents and reimbursement is made to Cities and Towns in the same manner as Veterans' Benefits.

The following are the reimbursements made by the Commonwealth for the calendar year 1958:

	<i>Veterans' Benefits</i> (one-half)	<i>Veterans' Benefits</i> (full)	<i>Burials</i>	<i>Total</i>
January	\$437,279.16	\$18,255.07	\$3,194.12	\$458,728.35
February	458,095.10	24,250.50	3,045.15	485,390.75
March	469,024.94	22,307.18	1,768.55	493,100.67
April	481,179.02	22,067.38	2,901.57	506,147.97
May	461,838.12	21,536.18	2,467.48	485,841.78
June	451,817.03	20,663.49	1,994.75	474,475.27
July	420,267.91	20,291.83	2,021.24	442,580.98
August	406,310.04	21,177.33	2,671.22	430,158.59
September	394,772.37	18,856.42	1,920.03	415,548.82
October	444,635.91	25,132.46	1,493.92	471,262.29
November	468,288.52	22,265.93	1,115.73	491,670.18
December	522,401.00	25,829.74	2,258.95	550,489.69
	<hr/> \$5,415,909.12	<hr/> \$262,633.51	<hr/> \$26,852.71	<hr/> \$5,705,395.34

The following are the reimbursements made by the Commonwealth for the calendar year 1959:

	<i>Veterans' Benefits</i> (one-half)	<i>Veterans' Benefits</i> (full)	<i>Burials</i>	<i>Total</i>
January	\$498,492.59	\$26,326.47	\$1,700.66	\$526,519.72
February	505,981.59	27,136.60	1,590.40	534,708.59
March	525,559.27	29,872.39	1,403.69	556,835.35
April	525,402.16	26,916.43	3,108.30	555,426.89
May	477,848.07	25,033.98	2,488.72	505,370.77
June	451,221.11	19,500.75	4,244.21	474,966.07
July	453,128.97	22,655.08	2,454.34	478,238.39
August	423,368.39	23,080.49	2,631.52	449,080.40
September	427,312.91	20,168.42	2,699.38	450,180.71
October	442,120.87	24,166.84	2,055.04	468,342.75
November	455,943.06	21,508.62	2,541.91	479,993.59
December	513,381.65	25,958.31	1,921.07	541,261.03
	<hr/> \$5,699,760.64	<hr/> \$292,324.38	<hr/> \$28,839.24	<hr/> \$6,020,924.26

Cases approved on monthly Returns for Veterans' Benefits for the calendar year 1958 were as follows:

	<i>Settled</i>	<i>State Settled</i>
January	10,477	260
February	10,803	238
March	11,185	259
April	11,198	367
May	11,083	231
June	10,858	233
July	10,680	222
August	9,837	244
September	10,099	232
October	10,458	235
November	10,399	233
December	10,836	262

Cases approved on monthly Returns for Veterans' Benefits for the calendar year 1959 were as follows:

	<i>Settled</i>	<i>State Settled</i>
January	10,638	296
February	10,974	290
March	10,589	287
April	10,728	263
May	10,383	248
June	10,194	244
July	10,154	230
August	9,907	235
September	9,291	233
October	9,912	249
November	9,782	243
December	10,026	262

State Burial claims approved as follows:

Calendar year 1958	Settled—316	State Settled—9
Calendar year 1959	Settled—317	State Settled—9

#### ANNUITIES FOR PARAPLEGIC AND BLIND VETERANS

Chapter 115 of the General Laws, as amended by Chapter 660, Acts of 1949, Chapter 530, Acts of 1953, and Chapter 567, Acts of 1956, provides for the payment of an annuity of \$500 per annum, to be paid monthly, to the following:

A veteran who, according to the records of the Veterans Administration of the United States government, has suffered permanent impairment of vision of both eyes of the following status: central visual acuity of 5/200 or less in the better eye, with corrective glasses, or central visual acuity of 5/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than twenty degrees in the better eye; a veteran who is suffering from paraplegia and has permanent paralysis of both legs and lower parts of the body, resulting from traumatic injury to the spinal cord or brain, sustained through enemy action, or accident while in such military or naval service, and a veteran who has permanent paralysis of both legs and lower parts of the body, resulting from malaria, anemia, other forms of disease, tumors or poisoning which may pro-

duce signs and symptoms similar to those resulting from traumatic paraplegia and certified by said Veterans Administration to be service-connected.

A veteran to be eligible must have resided in Massachusetts at time of acceptance for War-time service, and must be domiciled in Massachusetts while in receipt of the grant.

The cost for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1959 was \$106,905.80; for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1960 was \$109,911.51.

### BLOOD DONOR SERVICE

Blood Donor Service was established in the Office of the Commissioner of Veterans' Services on July 1, 1958 with a Supervisor of Blood Donations in charge.

There were approximately 2,844 donors during the period from July 1, 1958 through June 30, 1959, with a monetary value of \$71,100.

There were approximately 4,533 donors during the period from July 1, 1959 through June 30, 1960, with a monetary value of \$113,325.

The blood was donated within the borders of the Commonwealth to (1) the Blood Program of the American Red Cross and (2) the blood banks of private, State and Federal Hospitals. This figure represents only the actual number of pints of blood reported to this office. We feel certain that the number of actual donors is significantly higher but it has been impossible to devise a system whereby all donors will be reported to this office.

The blood needs of 258 patients were cared for in the first period to June 30, 1959; and 441 patients in the second period to June 30, 1960. The patients were in private hospitals in Massachusetts, in addition to patients in Veterans Administration Hospitals and Soldiers' Homes. All qualified veterans and their dependents were covered to the full extent of our ability to do so.

### VETERANS' BONUS

Chapter 417 of the Acts of 1959 authorized the continuation of the functions of the Veterans' Bonus Commission for a certain period and designated the Commissioner of Veterans' Services as the Director thereof. This provides for those veterans of the Korean hostilities who have not as yet received recognition for their services may continue to apply for and receive a bonus under the law.

The duties were taken over as of July 1, 1959 and for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1960, six hundred and seventy-seven claims were approved at a cost of \$140,100. There were refunds amounting to \$75.00 on demands made prior to July 1, 1959.

### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR REIMBURSEMENT FUND

Under the provisions of Chapter 280, Acts of 1928, the sum of \$29.70 was expended in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1959. The sum of \$196.80 was expended in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1960, of which \$15.00 was refunded by reason of the decease of a veteran.

### CONTACT OFFICE

The Contact Division of the Office of the Commissioner of Veterans' Services is located in the Boston Regional Office of the Veterans Administration at One Beacon Street, Boston. In this office there are eight full-time paid employees properly accredited to present claims before the Veterans Administration. In addition to these accredited representatives, the office has four full-time stenographic employees.

This office acts as a liaison between the State and Federal agencies and other State Governments, and between State and private agencies concerning veterans' problems and Federal aids to veterans. Its principal instrument is the Power of Attorney (P-22) from which, when signed by a veteran or his dependent or heir authorizes the Commissioner of Veterans' Services to act as a legal repre-



sentative of such person in all matters pertaining to the prosecution and settlement of such claims on account of military service. This office has been accredited by Congress and by the General Court (S. 22, C. 6, G.L.) to represent the interest of approximately 900,000 veterans and their dependents residing in the Commonwealth.

The office is staffed with skilled specialists who prepare, develop and prosecute claims for veterans and/or their dependents for benefits they are entitled to under the laws of the Veterans Administration.

The type of claims and services include

- (a) Compensation, pension, dependency and indemnity benefits, disability insurance, NSLI, review of discharges, obtainment of disability retirement pay when denied by the Armed Services.
- (b) Assistance with applications for prosthetic appliances, medical, dental and hospital care, burial allowance, accrued benefits, guardianship, and emergency hospital and medical care.
- (c) Assistance and guiding applicants who have problems relating to their education and/or training programs.
- (d) Applicants are given help in connection with their VA Loan Guaranty program.

The office maintains a working liaison with approximately three hundred and fifty-one local and district directors of Veterans' Services relative to all Veterans Administration matters. (This is in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 599, as amended by the Acts of 1946.) Since local agents are not accredited and do not have access to the records in the custody of the Veterans Administration, it logically follows that such cases must be referred to our Contact Office, if the veteran or dependent wishes us to have the Power of Attorney for successive actions involving review of records and appearances before the officials of the Veterans Administration. On cases requiring development, the local agent and/or the veteran is contacted and advised how to procure such evidence.

A member of the office visits the Providence Office of the Veterans Administration once a week in order to service all the needs of our veterans and their dependents of this State who come under the jurisdiction of the Providence Office. Approximately twenty cases are handled each week which have been referred by the local agents south of Plymouth.

For the year 1959, the office procured compensation and pensions for veterans and their dependents in the amount of \$2,202,397.00 and the following are the activities performed:

1. Personal visits by veterans and/or dependents to office .....	10,733
2. New claims for compensation and pension including live and death cases .....	3,840
3. Requests for review—old or disallowed claims .....	3,948
4. New claims for dental and medical Out-Patient treatment .....	974
5. Arrangements made for hospitalization .....	1,244
6. Arrangements made for Out-Patient medical treatment .....	1,948
7. Arrangements made for dental treatment .....	220
8. Cases reviewed at Service Tables .....	7,734
9. Board appearances and hearings .....	3,353
10. Interviews with agents .....	851
11. Federal Insurance cases .....	983
12. Educational & Rehabilitation Problems .....	324
13. Handling physical evaluation board retirement cases for physical disability retirement .....	218
14. Loan Guaranty cases at \$10,000 each .....	447
15. Checking Veterans Administration Finance for Agents .....	4,002
16. Requests for Civil Service Letters .....	757
17. Requests for Tax Abatement Letters for five months' period, June through October .....	1,760



18. Veterans Benefits referred from Veterans Administration and Service Organizations .....	1,137
19. Assisting veterans in preparing State Bonus applications .....	60
20. Contacting Legal Division re Appointment of Fiduciary of Incompetent Veterans .....	779

For the year 1960, the amount procured was \$2,429,280.65. Approximately seventy per cent of this amount is reflected in the great savings to the Cities and Towns by reducing the amount of Veterans' aid to be paid, which helps to keep the tax rate down. This money is also instrumental in aiding local business. The following are the activities performed:

1. Personal visits by veterans and/or dependents to office .....	11,119
2. New claims for compensation and pension including live and death cases .....	4,024
3. Requests for review—old or disallowed claims .....	4,138
4. New claims for dental and medical Out-Patient treatment .....	1,038
5. Arrangements made for hospitalization .....	1,304
6. Arrangements made for Out-Patient medical treatment .....	2,041
7. Arrangements made for dental treatment .....	170
8. Cases reviewed at Service Tables .....	8,253
9. Board appearances and hearings .....	3,514
10. Interviews with agents .....	850
11. Federal Insurance cases .....	1,038
12. Educational & Rehabilitation Problems .....	342
13. Handling physical evaluation board retirement cases for physical disability retirement .....	196
14. Loan Guaranty cases at \$10,000 each .....	395
15. Checking Veterans Administration Finance for Agents .....	4,271
16. Requests for Civil Service Letters .....	808
17. Requests for Tax Abatement Letters for five months' period from June through October .....	1,878
18. Veterans Benefits referred from Veterans Administration and Service Organizations .....	1,203
19. Assisting veterans in preparing State Bonus applications .....	45
20. Contacting Legal Division re Appointment of Fiduciary of Incompetent Veterans .....	820

## HOSPITAL CONTACT DIVISION

The Division endeavors to extend contact service to veterans undergoing hospitalization in public, private and VA hospitals within the Commonwealth and to provide cooperation and assistance to other Departments of the Commonwealth and local Veterans' Agents wherever appropriate.

One fundamental activity is the continuing effort to establish and develop the entitlement of veteran-patients within the State Mental Hospitals for transfer to VA Hospitals and for monetary benefits. Advice and assistance is extended to veterans seeking direct admissions to VA General Medical hospitals for treatment of physical disorders.

Massachusetts is favored with three capacious VA hospitals primarily for care and treatment of veterans suffering from neuropsychiatric disorders: one at Northampton, another at Brockton and a third at Bedford. Also, the Boston VA Hospital maintains a section assigned to treatment of veterans suffering from acute neuropsychiatric disorders. Notwithstanding these generous VA facilities, there are presently under psychiatric care in our State Hospitals approximately 1,340 veterans, most of whom are eligible for admission to VA hospitals on a Non-Service Connected basis, if and when VA facilities become available. We endeavor to sustain consciousness of these veterans by the VA and to insure commensurate review of their entitlement for transfer to VA hospitals.

The Hospital Contact Division is assigned two employees. One-half of the activities of each employee is devoted to field duties in the various hospitals while the remaining half time is invested at the Contact Office within the VA

Building. A substantial part of the duties involve reviewing records at the hospitals and within the several Divisions of the Veterans Administration. Discussions must be held with hospital and VA officials. Relatives and representatives of veterans are interviewed and advised concerning evidence necessary in the prosecution of claims for benefits. Assistance is given in the preparation of applications and reports. Necessary records are created and maintained to insure an orderly progression of activity on each case as circumstances suggest. Reports and correspondence are prepared as required.

We wish to express our thanks for the cooperation and consideration extended by the various employees of the several State and VA hospitals, by the Regional and Field Offices of the VA, by the local Veterans' Agents, and others whose fine cooperation has enabled the Division to perform its functions effectively.

#### REHABILITATION DIVISION—CONTACT OFFICE

The summary of services shown herewith indicates the broad scope of operations which the Rehabilitation Division is required to maintain in attending to all the requests for help and service it receives.

This report shows an increase in requests for help on matters which require counseling or guidance. For example—in 1959 this Division furnished individual, Vocational, Job and Personal counseling to about 900 veterans.

In 1959 the Rehabilitation Division received a greater number of problems relating to training and education than was the case in 1958. The number of problems relating to G.I. Loans, referred to this unit in 1959, were likewise more numerous and more involved than the number handled in 1958 due to restoration of previous applications for loans and certificates of eligibility.

In the broad field of training and education, affecting veterans of World War II, and those with Korean service, Congress first provided for the rehabilitation of the disabled. It enacted Public Law 16 for the disabled during the Korean period. Congress, in addition to Public Law 16 and Public Law 894, enacted Public Law 190 to provide for those who voluntarily enlisted in October 6, 1945 to October 5, 1946, and who might otherwise lose their entitlement due to the deadline established by the earlier statutes.

For the non-disabled veteran of World War II a program of G.I. training was established by Congress under Public Law 346. On August 20, 1952, Public Law 550 became effective and provided for training and education of the non-disabled veteran who served during the Korean period commencing June 27, 1950.

In addition to the large number of Public Law 16, Public Law 894 and Public Law 190 eligibles referred to, and serviced by the Division, in connection with problems relating to their training, an increasingly heavy demand for services of the Division are being received from veterans who served during the Korean period.

Because of the radical and confusing changes in Public Law 550, as compared to Public Law 346, and a whole series of new forms, new eligibility requirements, different handling of training allowances and extremely strict regulations governing training enrollment, and G.I. Loans, the Rehabilitation Division work in this field has decreased.

In processing the requests involving training and education a great many steps must be taken—some of which include the following:

- (a) Checking applications submitted for proper completion, seeing that correct forms are filed.
- (b) Checking with the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Division of Apprentice Training. When necessary, contacting veteran's employer of the Training Institution.
- (c) Checking with Finance Division to determine whether correct reports received and are in order.

The preceding actions are necessary to expedite the awarding of subsistence to the veteran and his family thus eliminating his having to seek financial aid from other agencies.

On questions relating to G.I. Loans referred to the Division, these are varied and sometimes complex. When a veteran applies for a certificate of eligibility, a check is made to see if he is entitled to a G.I. Loan and his papers are examined to see if he has ever been issued a certificate.

Veterans, who through reasons beyond their control are required to dispose of their homes, or because of medical reasons wish to acquire another home, are assisted in obtaining a restoration of their entitlement. This procedure is rather long and drawn out and it is to our credit that we are able to expedite quite a few applications for the veterans.

The Korean G.I. Bill reached its seventh anniversary after having serviced over 1,500,000 Korean veterans in their goal to train for virtually every type of career and occupation found in America. Many more veterans are expected to make use of their Korean G.I. training benefits before the program expires in 1965. The training program has reached its peak, of the three quarters of a million veterans who are taking this advantage, about 450,000 will be college students. After that, the numbers are expected to continue to drop off until the program reaches its end in 1965.

On October 1, 1956, Public Law 634 of the 84th Congress was enacted. This law is known as the War Orphans' Education Program. More than 150,000 children of deceased veterans, who died from service-connected disabilities, are expected to be eligible for Government grants to further their education, consequently, we have received numerous calls and inquiries on this law. Due to this, an educational program is being established by the Division to instruct the agents in processing claims for training under Public Law 634.

#### SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The monetary value of benefits accrued to veterans and their dependents through the efforts of this Division include:

	1959	1960
1. <i>Education and Training</i>		
a. Application for training under P. L. 550 and P. L. 894	324	215
b. Application for training under P. L. 16, P. L. 190 and P. L. 610	18	3
c. Total actions for P. L. 550, P. L. 894 and P. L. 15	2,317	1,879
d. Certificates issued for above 7-1993	511	208
e. Enrollment certificates received 7-1999	408	327
f. Appeals filed—Hearings	3	0
g. Monthly reports filed—7-1996 a/b	309	128
h. War Orphans' Education Program—P. L. 634	117	201
i. Out-of-State actions	23	9
j. Total amount issued on awards	\$448,110.00	\$82,641.00
k. Counseling applications filed	72	8
2. <i>Loan Guaranty</i>	1959	1960
a. Certificates of eligibility	1,182	1,300
b. Restoration of entitlement	307	208
c. Certificates of reasonable value	823	725
d. Certificates of Guaranty	212	193
e. Total actions taken on loans	6,182	8,324
f. Approximated estimates of mortgages	none	\$17,462.00
g. Certificates of eligibility issued via Legislative reports	192	181
h. Actions taken via Legislative requests	749	803
i. Approximated estimate of Legislative loans	\$972,826.00	\$483,000.00
3. <i>Miscellaneous</i>	1959	1960
a. General information requests	503	743
b. Tax and Civil Service letters	392	209
c. Folders transferred—in and out	43	26
d. Finance queries re Compensation, Pension, Subsistence, Overpayments, Education and Home Loans	4,376	6,843

LEGISLATION IN 1959 AFFECTING THE OFFICE OF THE  
COMMISSIONER OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Resolves, Chap. 98—Resolve providing for an investigation by the judicial council relative to the lien upon the real estate of certain recipients of Veterans' Benefits.

Acts, Chap. 417—An Act authorizing the continuation of the functions of the Veterans' Bonus Commission for a certain period and designating the Commissioner of Veterans' Services as the Director thereof.

LEGISLATION IN 1960 AFFECTING THE OFFICE OF THE  
COMMISSIONER OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Acts, Chap. 648—An Act providing for the enforcement of certain decisions of the Commissioner of Veterans' Services.

Acts, Chap. 690—An Act providing for reimbursement by the Commonwealth to the Town of Chester for certain expenditures for Veterans' Benefits.

Acts, Chap. 792—An Act authorizing liens on Workmen's Compensation payments to the extent of Veterans' Benefits paid to the employee.